

5. (twice amended) A ball retainer comprising a single rod that is bent back upon itself into a first substantial U-shape form to thereby form two substantially parallel legs in a plane, said parallel legs in said plane are again bent into a second U-shaped form which is substantially turned 90° from said first U-shaped form, free ends of said legs at an end of said second U-shaped form are fastened to a mounting plate, means for fastening said mounting plate to an object. [The ball retainer of claim 4,] wherein said mounting plate has enlarged vertical bosses at each vertical edge to thereby form an inner curvature substantially matching an outer surface of said [round pole] object including a belt for fastening said mounting plate to said [pole] object.

6. (once amended) The ball retainer of claim [4] 5 including a cleated belt for adjustably fastening said ball retainer mounting plate to said [pole] object.

7. (once amended) The ball retainer of claim 6, wherein said cleated belt is constructed of a flat and flexible belt having spaced apart round cleats thereon.

Original and amended claims

1. (currently amended) A ball retainer comprising a single rod that is bent back on itself into a first substantial U-shape form to thereby form two substantially parallel legs in a plane, said parallel legs in said plane are again bent into a second U-shaped form which is substantially turned 90° from said first U-shape form, free ends of said legs at an end of said second U-shape form are fastened to a mounting plate, means for fastening said mounting plate to an object, wherein said means for fastening is a [metal] strap having a tensioning buckle thereon

2. (canceled) [The ball retainer of claim 1, wherein said means for fastening are two holes in said mounting plate.]

3. (canceled) [The ball retainer of claim 1, wherein said means for fastening is a metal strap having a tensioning buckle thereon.]

4. (original) The ball retainer of claim 1, wherein said object is a substantially round pole.